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On Baptism.

B E I N G

THE SUBSTANCE OF
A DISCOURSE

Delivered in the Dissenters' Meeting-House,

A T

BEVERLEY in YORKSHIRE,

A T T H E B A P T I S M O F

The Rev. P. FEIST'S CHILD,

On Wednesday *April* 11th, 1792.

/c
By S. BARNARD, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

"ONE BAPTISM." PAUL.

PUBLISHED AT REQUEST.

H U L L:

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[PRICE SIXPENCE.]

On Baptism.

My dear Brethren,

I have this day publicly
administered baptism to a
few persons upon the sub-
ject; which I shall endeavor to do with all plain-
ness, and without desiring to give offence to any

person. I have this day
been much distressed, owing to pre-
judices which dis-



- I. The subjects to whom.
- II. The manner how;—and
- III. The purposes for which it ought to be ad-
ministered.

To which three general heads for the sake of
order, let us a little attend.

I. With respect to the subjects.
Under this head Brethren, I have to inform you,
that Baptism is no Church ordinance; but an or-
dinance to be administered out of, or before the
subject be admitted as a member of any particu-
lar Church whatsoever. * Accordingly we find, it

* See Dr. Gill's *Body of Divinity*, Vol. 3d page 314.

On Baptism.

MEN and BRETHREN,

XXXX SINCE by the particular desire of your
S dear *Minister*, I have thus *publicly* bap-
tized *his* Child; permit me as publicly
to drop a few thoughts upon the sub-
ject; which I shall endeavour to do with all plain-
ness, and without designing to give offence to any
one.

Baptism is a subject about which there has
been much dispute in the world, owing I pre-
sume (chiefly) to the different views which dif-
ferent people have, of

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I. With respect to the subjects.

Under this head Brethren, I have to inform you,
that Baptism is no *Church ordinance*; but an or-
dinance to be administered *out of*, or *before* the
subject be admitted as a member of any particu-
lar Church whatsoever.* Accordingly we find, it

* See Dr. Gill's Body of Divinity, Vol. 3d, page 311.

was many days after *Saul* was baptized, before he proposed to join himself to the disciples and was received by them. *

The ordinance of Baptism then appears to be a *dispensation* ordinance, † or an ordinance by which the subjects are ceremonially initiated into the gospel dispensation, or incorporated among that *body* of people, who are brought to profess that *Jesus Christ is the Son of God*; which outwardly distinguishes them from the body of *Jews*, who deny that plain fact. Out of this body of professing Christians it is, that the various particular Churches are collected, which are made up of persons who are judged *otherwise* properly qualified for the same. And in this sense Baptism seems to be to us, what Circumcision was to the Jews, viz. a *dispensation rite*. And if Baptism be not the initiating rite into the gospel dispensation, we should be glad to be informed what is. Now although children are *not* proper subjects for particular Church-membership, yet surely they are as proper subjects of a *dispensation*, as were the children of the Jews at eight days old. Nor is the above-mentioned the only particular, in which there appears to be an agreement between Circumcision and Baptism; as will appear by the following remarks.—For was Circumcision by express command? so also was Baptism.—Was the subject in Circumcision passive; so he is likewise in Baptism.—Was the belief in and profession of the one true God ne-

* Acts ix. 18—28.

† See Gale's Sermons, Vol. 21, page 282.

cessary for *adults* before they were circumcised? so is the belief in and profession of Jesus Christ being the Son of God necessary, before adults are baptized.—But were the Jewish children initiated into that dispensation *without* a belief in and profession of the one true God?—they were—and this seems to have been the Apostle's conduct in initiating into the gospel dispensation. *—Was there nothing in the nature and signification of the initiating rite of Circumcision which forbade its application to children? there was not; nor is there any thing in the nature and signification of *Baptism* that forbids its application to the like subjects, seeing that they are not only capable of the thing itself; but also of what is signified thereby.—Was Circumcision a *mark* or badge of distinction among the Jews? it was; so is Baptism among us who profess Christianity.—Did Circumcision give a *ceremonial* or *legal* right to the passover? it did; and so does Baptism to the *Lord's Supper*, to such who are judged otherwise properly qualified for the same: but however otherwise qualified a man may be, he has no ceremonial or legal right to that ordinance, till he be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; seeing that the Lord's Supper is a Church ordinance, and that no *unbaptized* person ought to be admitted into any particular Church whatsoever, as appears from the example of the three thousand in the acts of the Apostles; † who were first baptized, and then added to the Church.—Therefore

* Acts xvi. 14, 15: † Acts ii. 41.

were the uncircumcised cut off? they were, from their people and the privileges of an Israelite: so also, are the *unbaptized* cut off from the body of professing Christians and from all Church privileges whatsoever.—Was Circumcision of spiritual signification? it was, so also is Baptism, and represents to us the same things. * †

But should any say after all, that the Jewish children were received into that dispensation by express command, we grant it; and that command being no where in God's word superseded or set aside, is one reason why we baptize children; for a law not repealed must be still in force, and although the initiating rite into the Christian dispensation is different, from that of the Jewish; the subjects must remain the same, seeing we are no where told to the contrary. Now had it been said any where in the New Testament, that although *children* were initiated into the former dispensation, yet they must be left out of the present dispensation, the matter would have been clear; but as no intimation thereof is given in God's word, we conclude that God hath no such intention.

Another argument with which we support the right of infant Baptism, is the total silence of the word of God; relative to persons being baptized in adult years, who were born of *baptized* parents.—Now that *adults* were baptized we no

* Rom. ii. 29.—Col. ii. 11, 12.

† As for obvious reasons the Females could not receive the outward rite of Circumcision, they were therefore considered as circumcised in the Men, and partook of the same privileges.

more deny than we do that adults were circumcised. But then who were their parents? not baptized, but *unbaptized* people. And although the acts of the Apostles contain an history of upwards of *thirty* years; yet in all that space of time, there is not one person recorded, as being baptized in adult years, who was born of baptized parents; which is a clear proof to us, that the delay of infant Baptism was not at that time practised, and that we have no authority in the word of God for baptizing any *adults*, but those who were born of *unbaptized* parents, or those whose Baptism has been unwarrantably omitted by their parents in their infancy. Therefore should any ask us, why we do not practise *adult Baptism*, as did the Apostles? our reply is, we will, when we are stationed as they were, among Jews or Heathens.*

But another argument with which we support the rite of infant Baptism, is from the well known case of *Lydia* and her *household*.† The substance of which is—the Apostle preached—*Lydia* heard—the Lord opened her heart—and she was baptized and her *household*, or as the *Syriac* reads it, *Lydia* and her *children*,‡ which reading best accounts for the faith of *Lydia's* household not being mentioned in the above cited passage. But were we even to admit for a moment what cannot be proved, viz. that there were no children in *Lydia's* household, the argument would then remain the same. For suppose for instance, our Lord had any where said in his word, where-

* John ix. 22.—Acts xvii. 16, 23. † Acts xvi. 14, 15.

‡ See Burkett and Dr. Guyse, on the above passage.

ever you meet with any *parents* or *heads* of families, who acknowledge me to be Christ the Son of God, I command you to baptize *them* and *their households*, I suppose the matter then would have been thought decisive; and what could we have understood by such *command*, but that all the *family* from the parents even to the youngest child were to be baptized. Well Brethren the example in the passage which is now under consideration amounts to the very same thing; for the Lord opened the heart of *Lydia* (who was the head of a family,) and she was baptized and her *household* likewise, of whatsoever age they might be, and without any apparent qualification, but that of their being branches of her household. It is in vain therefore for any one to say "*we cannot prove that Lydia had any children*" for we do not want to prove that, all that we have to prove, is what I think no unprejudiced person will deny, viz. that children (where there are any) make a part of the household, and when this is done, our way is plain before us. And that this is the case appears very evident I think, not only from experience, but likewise from the word of God.* Therefore Brethren, as children do make part of a household, and as (from the Apostle's example) we are to baptize all the household on the profession of the parents or head of such household; then it must necessarily follow that either children must be baptized or rejected as being no part of the household or family: and if the Apostle did right in baptizing Lydia's

* Gen. xlv. 13, 19.—xlv. 5.—1 Tim. iii. 4.

household

household on *her* profession of faith only, I have done right in baptizing this Child, as a branch of a household, on the profession of her *parents* only, inasmuch as I have herein followed a plain scriptural example. But if it be unscriptural and unwarrantable, for a man to exclude his children from his household or family, it is equally unscriptural and unwarrantable to exclude them from Baptism. And here Brethren we may see how the Apostles understood their *commission*, they were to require of *adults* a profession of their faith in Christ, before they were initiated by baptism into the gospel dispensation, as the case of *Lydia* shows; but were to baptize or initiate their families, *if not adults*, without that profession, as appears by the case of her *household*. And had we no other example of the case of households in all the New Testament, *this* is sufficient to justify our practice. Similar to this was the practice of the Jews of old; for if *adults*, they must profess their belief in the one true God, before they were initiated into their dispensation, by the initiating rite of Circumcision; but their *children* were so initiated without that profession. Beside, Brethren, it does not appear to me, that it was ever the design of God, that the *parents* should be subjects of one dispensation and their *children* of another, accordingly we find that when the *adult Jews* were broken off for their unbelief, or rejection of Christ as the Messiah, their *little ones* were broken off also, or otherwise the *breaking off* would have affected the *parents*, but not their *children*. So also when the

adult Gentiles were grafted in among God's professing people, their little ones were grafted in with them,* or else *the grafting in* would be less extensive than the *breaking off*.

Were human authority admitted to have any weight on this subject, we could produce it.

The learned *Wall*, who took great pains in this enquiry tells us, that "from the Year of our Lord 400 to 1150, no society of men in all that period ever pretended to say, it was unlawful to baptize *infants*."

St. Austin, who wrote against *Pelagious* on original sin about the Year 410, has these words, "why are infants baptized for the remission of sin if they have none?" This argument puzzled *Pelagious*, as he did not deny *infant baptism*; and when he was charged with it he said, "men slander me, as if I denied Baptism to *infants*."

St. Ambrose, who wrote about 274 Years after the Apostles declares expressly, that "the Baptism of infants was the practice of the Apostles themselves and of the Church till that time."

In *Cyprian's* time about the Year 250, a question was started by *Fidus*, whether the Baptism of infants should not be deferred till the *eight day*, the old time of Circumcision. Upon which a council of sixty-six Bishops was called, who said, "it is our opinion that Baptism ought least of all to be refused to new-born infants."

Origen, who was born about the Year 183, within a hundred Years of the Apostles themselves, says, "the Baptism of children is given

* Rom. xi. 17—24.

“for the remission of sins.” Now altho’ *Origen* as well as *St. Austin* above-mentioned, spoke of it as being administered for a wrong purpose, (viz. “for the remission of sins”) yet that it was at that time in practice is very evident by their joint testimony.

Tertullian, it is true, who lived at the same time, spoke against infant Baptism, having entertained a notion, that sin committed after Baptism, was next to, if not altogether unpardonable; therefore he advised its delay (unless in case of necessity) even till after marriage; which is a sufficient proof that it was then in practice.

Let us proceed now as was proposed,

II. To the manner how Baptism ought to be administered.

And here Brethren, we are certain that water is to be used in some form or other, * as we are also, that it is to be administered in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. † But then what we differ about is, whether the water is to be applied to the *subject*, or the *subject* to the water.

If we attend to the original word *baptizo*, as it is explained by some, they tell us, that it signifies invariably to *dip*, *plunge*, or to *wash*; but then they will take care to inform us that there is no washing without dipping: ‡ but if we attend to *experience* and *scripture*, we shall soon see the impropriety of this explanation, and that the word *baptizo* cannot be restrained in its signification to dip or plunge only; and till that can be done, the

* Acts x. 47. † Matt. xxviii. 19.

‡ See Dr. Gill’s Body of Divinity, vol. iii. page 335.

mode of dipping can never be established, as the *only* mode of baptizing.

First, then let us attend to experience, and a child of a moderate capacity will tell us, that when he washes his face, he does not dip it in, but applies water to it. Ask the same child also, how his mother washes the *floor* of her house, and he will be able to inform you, that she does not dip it into the water, but applies the water to it. Ask him moreover how the *walls* or *ceiling* of a room are white washed ; and there is no doubt but he will tell you as before, not by dipping them into the liquor, but by applying the liquor to them ; and by these answers will prove to you, that there is such a thing as “ *washing without dipping* : and if it were not so, the face is a part of the body that would *seldom* be washed, and the *floor*, the *walls*, or the *ceiling* of a room, for obvious reasons would never be washed at all.

But, secondly, let us attend to the scripture upon this head, and if *baptizo* mean invariably to *plunge* or *dip*, either of them may be substituted with equal propriety in its room, without destroying the sense of the passages of scripture wherein it occurs ; but if this cannot be done, it is very evident that the words *baptizo*, *dip* and *plunge*, cannot be synonymous, or terms of the same meaning. Therefore in order to make this matter appear as plain as we can, let us attend to the following scriptures, using the word *plunge* instead of baptize, &c.

John did *plunge* in the wilderness, and preached the *plunging* of repentance for the remission of sins.

sins. *—I indeed have *plunged* you with water ; but he shall *plunge* you with the Holy Ghost. †—But Jesus said unto them, ye know not what ye ask ; can ye drink of the cup that I drink of ? and be *plunged* with the *plunging* that I am *plunged* with ?—Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and with the *plunging* that I am *plunged* withal ; shall ye be *plunged*. ‡—And he (Paul) said unto them, unto what then were ye *plunged* ? and they said unto John's *plunging*. Then said Paul, John verily *plunged* with the *plunging* of repentance. &c. §—When John had first preached before his coming, the *plunging* of repentance. || For by one spirit, are we all *plunged* into one body. ¶—For as many of you as have been *plunged* into Christ, have put on Christ. ** And if the terms *baptizo* and *plunge* be synonymous, then the doctrine of *Baptisms*, in the Hebrews, may be read the doctrine of *plungings* !!

But from these, and many more passages of scripture that might be produced ; it evidently appears, that the words *baptizo* and *plunge* cannot be terms of the same meaning : and were we to supply the original word with *dip* or *sprinkle*, the same absurdities would follow of course. From whence we may learn, that neither *plunge*, *dip*, nor *sprinkle* can be the *primary* meaning of the term *baptizo* ; though either of them may be a *mode*, by which the subject may be brought into a baptized state.

* Mark i. 4. † Mark i. 8. Acts i. 5. ‡ Mark x. 38, 39.

§ Acts xix. 3, 4. || Acts xiii. 24. ¶ 1 Cor. xii. 13. ** Gal. iii. 27.

Now, Brethren you have to observe, that BAPTISM is a *general term*, which includes divers modes of application ; and besides the *etymological* or *grammatical* meaning, it has a *sacramental* meaning, which is generally overlooked by writers on this subject.

The *sacramental* meaning of the term Baptism seems to include PURIFICATION, *dedication*, *consecration*, *separation*, or *initiation*, and the like, according to the connexion in which it stands.—But the etymological or grammatical meaning of the original word for baptize, is *primarily to wash, tinge, stain, dye, or bring into a state of wetness* ; and in a *secondary* sense, *to dip, pour on, or sprinkle*, as so many modes of bringing about the *primary* design. This is proved at large by Mr. Williams, in conjunction with many more of the most able critics, in his *Antepoedobaptism examined* ; to which I refer the reader.

Doctor Owen tells us, that “ no instance can “ be given in scripture, wherein *Baptizo* doth “ necessarily signify either to *dip* or *plunge*,”—and that “ it no where signifies to *dip*, but as a “ MODE of, and in order to *washing, wetting,* “ or *dying*.”*

And even Medley, Stannet, and Dr. Gale, (all of them Baptist ministers) are forced to acknowledge, that the word *Baptizo*, does not necessarily imply a total immersion or dipping.

Doctor Gale in his answer to Wall, † says, “ the word *Baptizo* does not so necessarily express the *action* of putting a thing under wa-

* Collection of Sermons and Tracts, Page 581. † Page 117.

“ter, as in general the thing being in that condition, no matter how it comes so; whether it is put into the water, or the water comes over it.” So that according to this gentleman’s opinion, *Baptism* may be as well performed by applying *water to the subject*, as it can by applying the *subject to the water*.—Just the same as if a man wanted to have his body brought into a *refreshed state*, this may be done either by applying the *food* to his mouth, or his *mouth* to the food; though the former seems to be the most natural way of bringing about the *primary* design, which is to *refresh his body*, so also if a person want to be brought into a baptized state, or a state of legal PURIFICATION, *consecration, separation, dedication, or initiation*; this (as Dr. Gale justly observes) may be done, either by applying the subject to the water, or the water to the subject; though the latter (to us) appears the most natural mode as well as the most agreeable to the word of God.*

Now if we adhere to the *sacramental* meaning of the word *baptizo* which is *ceremonially to purify, consecrate, separate, dedicate, or initiate*, according to its connexion, we shall then have decent and proper language all through the Bible.

Thus for instance John says, I indeed have *baptized* (that is purified) you with water, but he shall baptize (or purify) you with the Holy Ghost. †—And the Eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be *baptized*? or ce-

* Lev. xiv. 7. Num. xix. 11—20. Acts x. 45. † Mark i. 8.

remonially

remonially *devoted* to God, and *initiated* into the gospel dispensation.

John answered them saying, I baptize (that is separate or set apart the people) with water.* For by one spirit we are all *baptized* (or initiated) into one body.† And were all *baptized* (or separated unto Moses, in, or by means of the cloud and the sea.‡—Go ye therefore and teach all nations, *baptizing* them, or *separating* them from others; *dedicating* them to me, and *initiating* them into my dispensation, by the initiating rite of *Baptism*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.§—He that believeth and is baptized, (that is consecrated or devoted to me) shall be saved. ||

Therefore if we consider a state of legal *purification, consecration, separation, dedication, or initiation*, to be a state of *Baptism*, when the ordinance is intended, and then consider that the subjects may be brought into that state, either by applying them to the water, or the water to them; the difficulties and improprieties then vanish away.

But let us proceed now to examine some of those passages of scripture which are thought to favour the idea of *dipping* or *plunging*. We will begin with our Lord's baptism by John, which some think to be a very striking proof of *adult* baptism by *plunging*. The substance of the relation is—Jesus came to John to be baptized—John modestly forbade him—Jesus said, suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us (Priests) to

* John i. 26. † 1 Cor. xii. 13. ‡ 1 Cor. x. 1. § Matt. xxviii. 19.

¶ Mark xvi. 16.

fulfil all righteousness. *—Now in order to understand the true meaning of this part of God's word, you have here to consider, what this *righteousness* is to which our Lord alludes : and you will find it to be the righteousness not of the *moral*, but of the *ceremonial* law, and especially that part of it, which required the priest to be *thirty years of age*, and that he should be *washed with water* before he entered upon that office. † So that the plain fact is, when Jesus began to be about *thirty years of age*, ‡ and was going to enter upon his *public ministry*, and knowing that the ceremonial law required that the priest should be washed with water, he went to John and requested of him to perform that ceremony, and upon John's objecting to it, Jesus said, suffer it to be so now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness ; and if Christ did not at this time fulfil this part of the *ceremonial* law ; we should be glad to know when he did. Besides we may observe here, that John's baptism was no Christian ordinance ; accordingly we find that there is a distinction kept up between John's disciples and the disciples of Christ ; § for John's Baptism denominated no one a *disciple of Christ*.

Again, John's Baptism was of short duration only ; but the Christian Baptism is a standing ordinance to the end of the world.—And that John's Baptism was no Christian ordinance appears moreover, from the case of the twelve disciples met with by Paul, which reads thus. Paul finding

* Matt. iii. 13,—15. † Num. iv. 23. Lev. viii. 5, 6. ‡ Luke iii. 23.

§ Matt. ix. 14.

certain disciples he said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? and they (the certain disciples) said, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he (Paul) said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? and they (the certain disciples) said unto John's Baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him, which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. When they (the certain disciples) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* From whence it follows, that if John's had been a Christian Baptism; Paul would never have suffered these twelve disciples to have been baptized the *second* time; therefore either John's was no Christian Baptism, or these twelve disciples were *Anabaptists*; but if the latter be denied, then the former must be granted.

And were we to admit what cannot be proved; viz. that John's mode of baptizing was that of *dipping*, it could be no rule for us in administering the Christian Baptism, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; therefore could a thousand examples of John's baptizing by immersion, be produced, they would be of no use in establishing that mode of baptizing.

But let us attend now to that remarkable circumstance related in the Acts of the Apostles, where we are informed, that they who gladly re-

* Acts xix. 1-5.

ceived the Apostle's word were baptized, and the same day were added unto them about three thousand souls. *—Now when I consider that none of these people knew of their *conversion* when they went from home, and that they were not provided with *proper garments*; when I consider the danger of going home in their *wet clothes*, and the *indecentcy* of their being baptized *naked*, men and women together; when I consider that we are told of but *twelve men*, to baptize *three thousand* people; and that all this was performed in *one day only*, there appears to me not the least probability of their being dipped, but that the ordinance must be performed by some other mode.

The next case to which I shall call your attention is that of Philip and the Eunuch, † which is thought by some very much to favour baptizing by immersion. In this relation we are informed, that they went both of them down *into* the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he *baptized him*.

Now in the first place our brethren must *suppose* that there was a sufficient *depth of water* for Philip to dip the Eunuch in, which they know nothing about.—In the next place they *suppose* that Philip and the Eunuch went *into* it, for even of this they cannot be certain, seeing that the *particle here rendered into*, is in many other places rendered to, ‡ and might with equal propriety in this.—And in the third place they *suppose* that Philip *plunged* the Eunuch under

* Acts ii. 41. † Acts viii. 38. ‡ Matt. xvii. 27. Go thou to the sea, &c.

water ; which they know nothing about, since the original word cannot be confined to that mode of baptizing only. With these considerations I conclude then, that no modest or conscientious man would venture to say, that he is *certain* that Philip baptized the Eunuch, by *putting him under water*.

But let us attend now to those cases, wherein we are informed of the ordinance being performed in different houses ; such for instance, as *Saul's* Baptism in the house of *Judas*, * the Disciple's in the house of *Cornelius*, † and the Jailer's in a like situation. ‡ Now before these people can be baptized by the mode of dipping ; our brethren must *suppose* that there was a *bath* in each of these houses, and this the *Bible* knows nothing about, therefore we ought to reject it.—And in the next place they must *suppose* also that these people were *dipped* in these baths ; but of this no one can be certain, unless the original word for baptize could be restrained in its signification, to that mode of baptizing only, which cannot be ; seeing that it signifies in a (*secondary sense*) to *pour on*, and to *sprinkle*, as well as to *dip* ; as appears by the use of the word in the three following passages of scripture.

The Apostle tells us that John truly *baptized* with water, but ye shall be *baptized* with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. § Now the way by which this Baptism was accomplished was not by the mode of dipping, but by that of

* Acts ix. 11—12. † Acts x. 47. ‡ Acts xvi. 33. § Acts i. 5.

pouring

pouring on ; for on the Gentiles also was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost. * And yet this *pouring out* is called by the Apostle, (was he right think you?) baptizing with the Holy Ghost.

But another passage in which the original word occurs, is recorded by Daniel, who informs us that Nebuchadnezzar's body was *wet*, that is, (according to the Septuagint version) *baptized* with the dew of Heaven. † Now we are sure that the body of the degraded monarch was not dipped *with* the dew of Heaven, but was *wet*, *sprinkled* or *baptized*, by means of the dew falling upon him.—And another place in which the word makes its appearance, and from which place the idea of dipping cannot be gathered is, where the Apostle says of the Israelites “ they “ were all *baptized* unto Moses, in the cloud and “ in the sea. ‡ Now we are told in another place that they went into the midst of the sea upon *dry ground*, and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left. § But then how it is possible for a person to be *dipped in the sea* and yet remain upon dry ground as the Israelites did, does not lie upon me to show. It is in vain for any to say, that the subjects in the foregoing passages were “ *as it were dipped*,” for that is in fact to acknowledge that they were not dipped at all ; beside if the action of *dipping* did pass upon these subjects, what occasion is there for the words “ *as it were dipped*,” but if it did not, the words *as it were*, will never perform that action. From the use of the word then in

* Acts x. 45. † Dan. v. 21. ‡ 1 Cor. x. 2. § Exod. xiv. 22.

these three passages we may learn, that to *pour on*, and to *sprinkle*, are proper modes of baptizing; and although we grant that the subject may be brought into a baptized state by *dipping* or *plunging*, yet there is not one passage in all the word of God, by which it can be proved that the ordinance was ever performed by that mode. Therefore that "*dipping is the only mode of baptizing*," appears to me to be a *supposition* from first to last, and must remain so, because the *original word*, cannot be restrained to that mode of baptizing *only*.

There is one more passage which is thought by some to be a very striking proof of baptizing by immersion; I mean, where the Apostle speaks of being *buried* with Christ in *Baptism*; * from whence it is thought by some, that the Apostle had an allusion to *plunging* or *dipping* as a representation of the *death, burial, and resurrection* of Christ, though it is evident he had no such a meaning, for the Apostle in the above-mentioned passage, is guarding the Colossians against the judaizing teachers, and says, ye are complete in Christ, in whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision *made without hands*, (manifested) in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; by the Circumcision of Christ; or the *Christian Circumcision*, which is the Baptism of the Holy Ghost.—Buried with him in (this) Baptism, wherein also ye are raised with him through the faith of the operation of God; as much as though the Apostle had said, as ye are complete in him

* Col. ii. 12.

as to your *pardon* and *justification*; so also are ye dead with him, that is as he died *for* sin, so are you dead *to* sin.—As Christ was buried in the sepulchre, so also are you buried from the world and the allurements thereof; for as in a *burial* the *Prince* suffers the loss of a subject and the *world* of a companion; so when a sinner is *dead* to sin and *buried* with Christ; *Satan* the prince of this world loses a subject, and *carnal men* a companion. And as Christ rose from the dead the third day, so also are you risen with him to newness of life, through the faith of the operation of God. From hence then it is evident, that what the Apostle had in view, was to show the Colossians, not that *plunging* was a representation of the *death*, *burial*, and *resurrection* of Christ; but that the spiritual *Circumcision* and the spiritual *Baptism* were one and the same thing; and that a death unto sin, and rising to newness of life, were the immediate effect of both, for if he were speaking of a Circumcision *made without hands*; so he was also of a Baptism *made without hands*, and thus they possessed spiritually, what the *literal Circumcision* and the *literal Baptism* represented to them.

But let us attend now

III. To the purposes for which Baptism ought to be administered.

Here Brethren I must inform you, that it ought not to be administered as some have unwarrantably asserted, for *the forgiveness of sins*. *

* The Scripture shews us, that Christ instituted Baptism for the *remission of sins*.—Dr. Gale's Sermons, vol. 2d, page 195.

because

because we are expressly told by the Apostle John, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from *all sin*, * and if the blood of Christ cleanse from *all sin*, the water can cleanse from none, therefore if a person go into the water with the guilt of his sins upon his conscience, he will come out in the same condition, for all that the water can do towards removing that guilt. Beside whoever they are that maintain Baptism to be in any sense *necessary to salvation*, act not only an inconsistent, but also a very *cruel* part, in refusing to administer it to children ; because were their sentiments right, all such unbaptized children must be excluded from Heaven.

Again, Baptism ought not to be administered in order to obtain *eternal happiness*, and although it has been suggested that no one has a right to expect Heaven without *water Baptism* ; § yet we should do well to remember, that although the thief upon the cross never had that ordinance administered to him at all, our Lord said unto him, this day shalt thou be with me in paradise. †

Nor ought it to be administered in order to obtain *peace of conscience* thereby ; because that is obtained in a way of believing *only*. ‡ But what then say you, ought Baptism to be administered for ? I answer—

Baptism is an ordinance of the gospel, in which the subject is externally *separated* from the unbaptized *Jews* or *Heathens*, and solemnly *dedicated* to God, by the application of water to his

* 1 John i. 7. † Luke xxiii. 43. ‡ Rom. xv. 13.

§ Our Lord makes this ordinance necessary to our *entering into the kingdom of God*—M^r Lean's Christ's commission, page 132.

body ;

body, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; *for the purpose of initiating him into the gospel dispensation, and of giving him a ceremonial or legal right to all the external privileges of the same.*

This ordinance of Baptism is moreover, of *spiritual signification* as before observed; and points out the *necessity and nature* of the work of the spirit in the heart; whose influence or operations may be compared to water, for its cooling, cleansing, purifying and refreshing nature, therefore said our Lord to Nicodemus, *except a man be born of water and of the spirit, that is, except the spirit of God operate upon his soul as water does upon the body, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.**

From what has been said then it appears that *children* are proper subjects of the *gospel dispensation*, and have a right to *Baptism*, which is the initiating rite into that dispensation; and that there is not any thing in the nature or signification thereof, which forbids its application to them.—That *dipping* or *plunging* is not the only mode of baptizing, seeing that the original word for *Baptize*, cannot be restrained in its signification to *that mode only*, which is manifest from the improprieties which arise from substituting the word *plunge*, instead of *baptize*.

It appears moreover that the *sacramental* meaning of the original word for *Baptize* is to *purify, consecrate, separate, dedicate, or initiate*, according

* John iii. 5.

to its connexion ; and that the *etymological* or grammatical meaning thereof is *primarily* to *wash, tinge, stain, dye*, or bring into a state of *wetness* ; and in a *secondary* sense to *dip, pour on*, or to *sprinkle* ; as so many modes of bringing about the primary intention or design : therefore Baptism is as well performed by applying water to the subject, as it is by applying the subject to the water, as Dr. Gale justly observes. And the quantity of water to be used in *this sacrament*, is no more essential, than the quantity of *bread* or *wine* is in that of the Lord's supper.

It appears also, that the purpose for which *Baptism* ought to be administered, is not to obtain *pardon of sin, peace of conscience*, nor *eternal happiness* ; but to *initiate* the subjects into the gospel dispensation, and to give them a *ceremonial* or *legal* right to all the external privileges of the same. It moreover points out to us, the necessity and nature of the spirit's influence on the heart, which may be compared to water for its cooling, purifying and refreshing nature.

THE ADDRESS TO THE PARENTS.

You my dear *Brother*, and your *Partner* in life, appear now in the important Character of PARENTS. May God help you to support that Character with that consistency, which has hitherto marked your conduct in every other relation. For although *Parents* have to consider their children

as an addition to their *blessings* , yet they should remember also that they are an addition to their *duties* , as well as to their *cares* and *anxieties* in life.

You look upon this your *dear Babe* , and while you are looking, you acquire a new set of feelings, which are known to none, except to those who like yourselves stand in the relation of *Parents* .

You see her helpless state in which she is born, which perhaps reminds you of what you once were, as well as of that hand which has kindly brought you to the present moment, and into that relation in which you now stand to her.

You are well acquainted with the snares of the world into which she is brought, and no doubt but you feel the importance of committing *her* betimes into the hands of the Parent of the Universe, of *dedicating* her to him, and *initiating* her into the gospel dispensation, by the initiating rite of Baptism ; and by which she is *outwardly* distinguished from the offspring of professed Jews or Heathens, and incorporated among those who profess the Christian Religion.

Should the Lord be pleased to exercise her with severe affliction, may you view the *dear little sufferer* with christian composure, and should he think proper to take her away from you by death ; may you be enabled to resign her in the language of *Job* ; the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.

Sure I am, that you my dear Friends, whom I am now addressing, will not think that the whole

of your duty is discharged towards this your *dear Babe*, in thus dedicating her to God, and initiating her into the gospel dispensation ; but (should her life be spared) you will teach her the principles of that religion, which you yourselves enjoy the comforts of.

You will endeavour to impress her young and tender mind with a sense of GOD, of CHRIST, and of ETERNITY, and to check betimes those irregular passions which you may discover in her, and which are the offspring of a corrupt nature ; and with a suitable mixture of *authority* and *tenderness*, endeavour to lead her into the paths of religious duty, and to convince her that the welfare of her soul, is the main thing which you have in view.

Be frequently, my dear Friends, setting forth in her hearing *man's fallen state in Adam*, by whose offence judgment came upon all men to condemnation, through the imputation of that offence to them.

At all convenient seasons, speak to her upon the *corruption of nature*, which is derived from a fallen head, and endeavour to convince her, that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, that every imagination of the thoughts thereof is only evil continually, that out of it proceeds every species of sin, which she may hereafter commit ; that the least deviation from the *spiritual*, as well as the *literal* meaning of the law of God is sin, and that every transgressor of that law is in God's word pronounced *accursed*,
for

etc.

for cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

Point out to her, moreover, man's utter inability to help or deliver himself, out of that sinful and miserable state into which he is fallen, knowing that no man can deliver his own soul; and as the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the Leopard his spots, so neither can he who is accustomed to do evil, (of himself) learn to do good; therefore they who are in the flesh, or in a state of nature, cannot please God; inasmuch as men by nature are *without God*, and without *hope* in the world, *without Christ*, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, that they are sensual *having not the spirit*, and destitute of that faith which he alone can produce, and without which it is impossible to please God.

But having endeavoured to make her sensible of her sinful, miserable and helpless state; you will find it necessary moreover, to make known to her *man's recovery by Jesus Christ*; which subject I doubt not, but you will enter upon with pleasure, and speak of it in a manner suitable to her young and tender mind.

Endeavour to shew her as early as you can, that as by *Adam's disobedience* all that are in *union* with him, are made sinners; so also by *Christ's obedience* all that are in *union* with him, are made righteous before God, through the imputation of his righteousness to them.† And that as sin de-

* Gal. iii. 10. † Rom. vii. 19. and iv. 6.

serves punishment, Christ became the *surety* of his people, had their sins laid upon him, and bore *them* as well as the punishment thereof, in his own body upon the tree : and so made peace (on God's part) by the blood of his cross ; whose blood cleanseth *his people* from all sin, and whose righteousness, (consisting of his *active* and *passive* obedience,) is the *sole matter* of their justification before God ; separate from any thing which is *wrought in them*, or *done by them* ; for we are justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*

But above all, labour to convince her of her unfitness for Heaven while in an unrenewed state, informing her, that *water Baptism* did *not* regenerate her, as is by some supposed ; but that she was thereby only ceremonially *devoted* to God, *initiated* into the gospel dispensation, and entitled to all the *external privileges* of the same.

Tell her also that *Baptism* is of spiritual signification ; and that it points out the *necessity* and *nature* of the spirit's influence upon the heart, whose office it is to quicken the sinner ; for says the Apostle, you hath he *quicken*ed, who were dead in trespasses and sins.—Tell her moreover that it is his office to convince *of sin, righteousness* and *judgment*, of original and actual sin, of sinful words, thoughts and actions ; of the insufficiency of our righteousness to justify us and to appear in before God ; and of the all-sufficiency of *Christ's righteousness* for those purposes ; and that there

* Rom. iii. 24.

will be a *judgment* at which she must be present, for God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness; in which day we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. Let her know also, that as it is the office of the spirit to *quicken* and to *convince* his people, so also it is his office to lead and to guide them into all truth; to regenerate or sanctify their souls; to make them meet for communion with *God* and *Saints* here, and for the inheritance of the Saints in light hereafter: as well as to take of the things which relate to Christ, and show to them their interest therein, and to bare witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God, enabling them to claim their privilege by crying, *Abba Father*.

Endeavour to guard her mind against resting in a form of godliness, while she is destitute of the power thereof; and to make her sensible of the difference that subsists between the doctrine of *justification* and the doctrine of *sanctification*; or in other words, between the work of Christ *without* her, and the work of the spirit *within* her; for blending these together, can never fail of introducing error, corrupting her judgment, and confusing her mind; therefore as they are distinct *things*, and for distinct *purposes*; speak of them to her in a distinct *manner*.

There are other distinctions which you will find it necessary to make to her in the course of instructing her, in order that she may see the consistency of the word of God, and in order that her

her young and tender mind may be fortified with truth, and guarded against unsound notions in religion.

These things, my dear Friends, I conceive to be a part of your duty; for although you cannot give your child grace, you may communicate instruction. And for your encouragement in the constant discharge of this your *duty*, remember it is said by Solomon “*train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*”

Now, in the NAME of my dear Friends the *Parents*, and in the NAME of this *dear Babe* who is unable to speak for herself; I ask the united PRAYERS of all this ASSEMBLY, that their *efforts* and *instructions* may not be in vain.

F I N I S.
10 FEB 58

